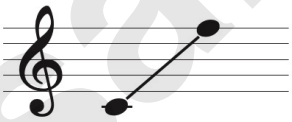
VANDERBEEK & IMRIE LTD.

J M Synge's Petrarch

THE FIRST THREE

Three Songs for Voice



and Piano

by

David Ward

Perusal Score

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Sonnets from *Laura in Death*

(The first three of J M Synge's *Translations from Petrarch*)

1

Laura being dead, Petrarch finds trouble in all the things of the earth

Life is flying from me, not stopping an hour, and death is making great strides following my track. The days about me, and the days passed over me, are bringing me desolation, and the days to come will be the same surely.

All things that I am bearing in mind, and all things that I am in dread of, are keeping me in troubles, in this way one time, in that way another time, so that if I wasn't taking pity on my own self it's long ago I'd have given up my life.

If my dark heart has any sweet thing it is turned away from me, and then farther off I see the great winds where I must be sailing. I see my good luck far away in the harbour, but my steersman is tired out, and the masts and the ropes on them are broken, and the beautiful lights where I would be always looking are quenched.

2

He asks his heart to raise itself up to God

What is it you're thinking, lonesome heart? For what is it you're turning back ever and always to times that are gone away from you? For what is it you're throwing sticks on the fire where it is your own self that is burning?

The little looks and sweet words you've taken one by one and written down among your songs, are gone up into the heavens, and it's late, you know well, to go seeking them on the face of the earth.

Let you not be giving new life every day to your own destruction, and following a fool's thoughts for ever. Let you seek heaven when there is nothing left pleasing on the earth, and it a poor thing if a great beauty, the like of her, would be destroying your peace, and she living or dead.

3

He wishes he might die and follow Laura

In the years of her age the most beautiful and the most flowery – the time Love has his mastery – Laura, who was my life, has gone away leaving the earth stripped and desolate. She has gone up into the heavens, living and beautiful and naked, and from that place she is keeping her lordship and her reign upon me, and I crying out: Ohone, when will I see that day breaking that will be my first day with herself in paradise?

My thoughts are going after her, and it is that way my soul would follow her, lightly, and airily, and happily, and I would be rid of all my great troubles. But what is delaying me is the proper thing to lose me utterly, to make me a greater weight on my own self.

Oh, what a sweet death I might have died this day three years to-day!

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3	page 10

Perusal Score

J M Synge's Petrarch: the first three

Sonnets from *Laura in Death*

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Laura being dead, Petrarch finds trouble in all the things of the earth

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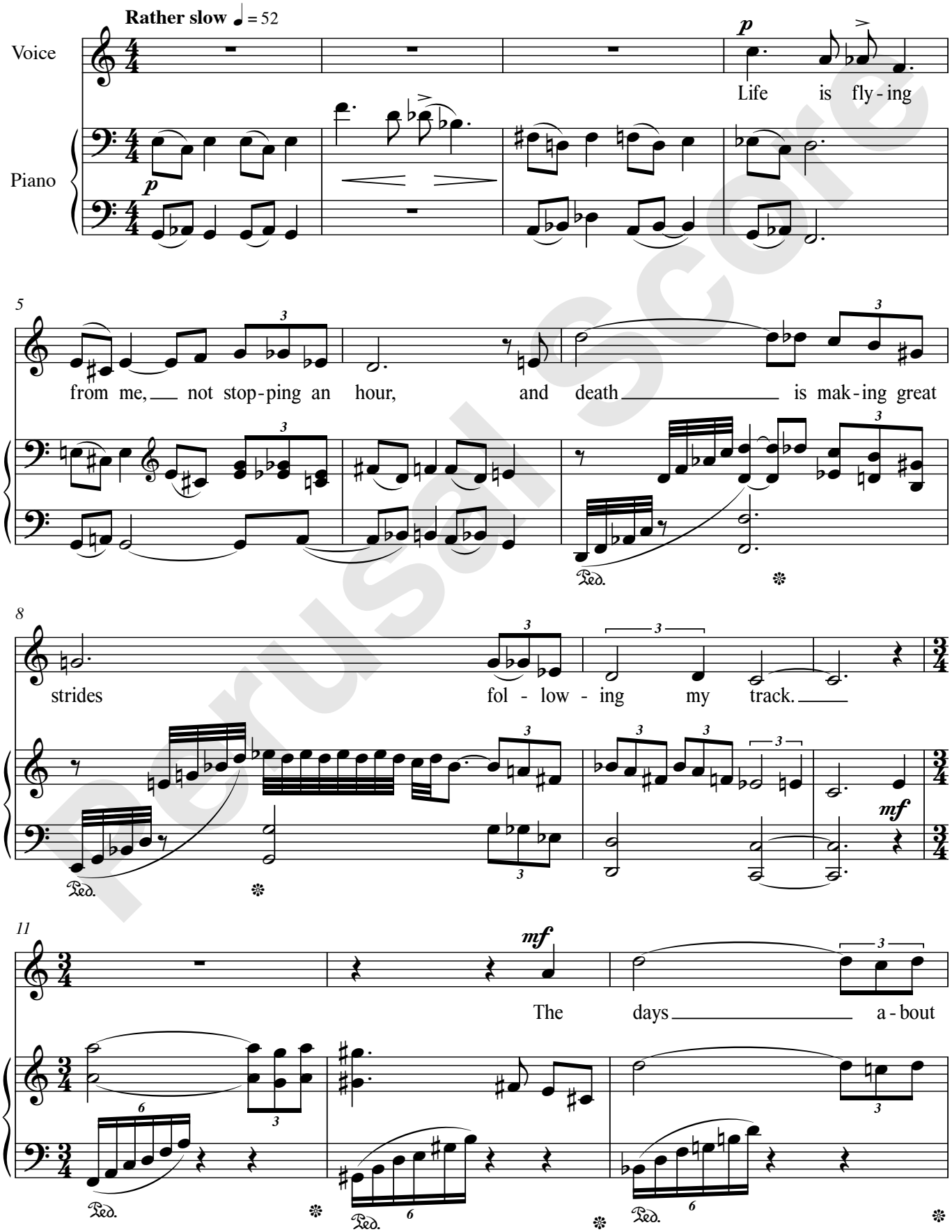

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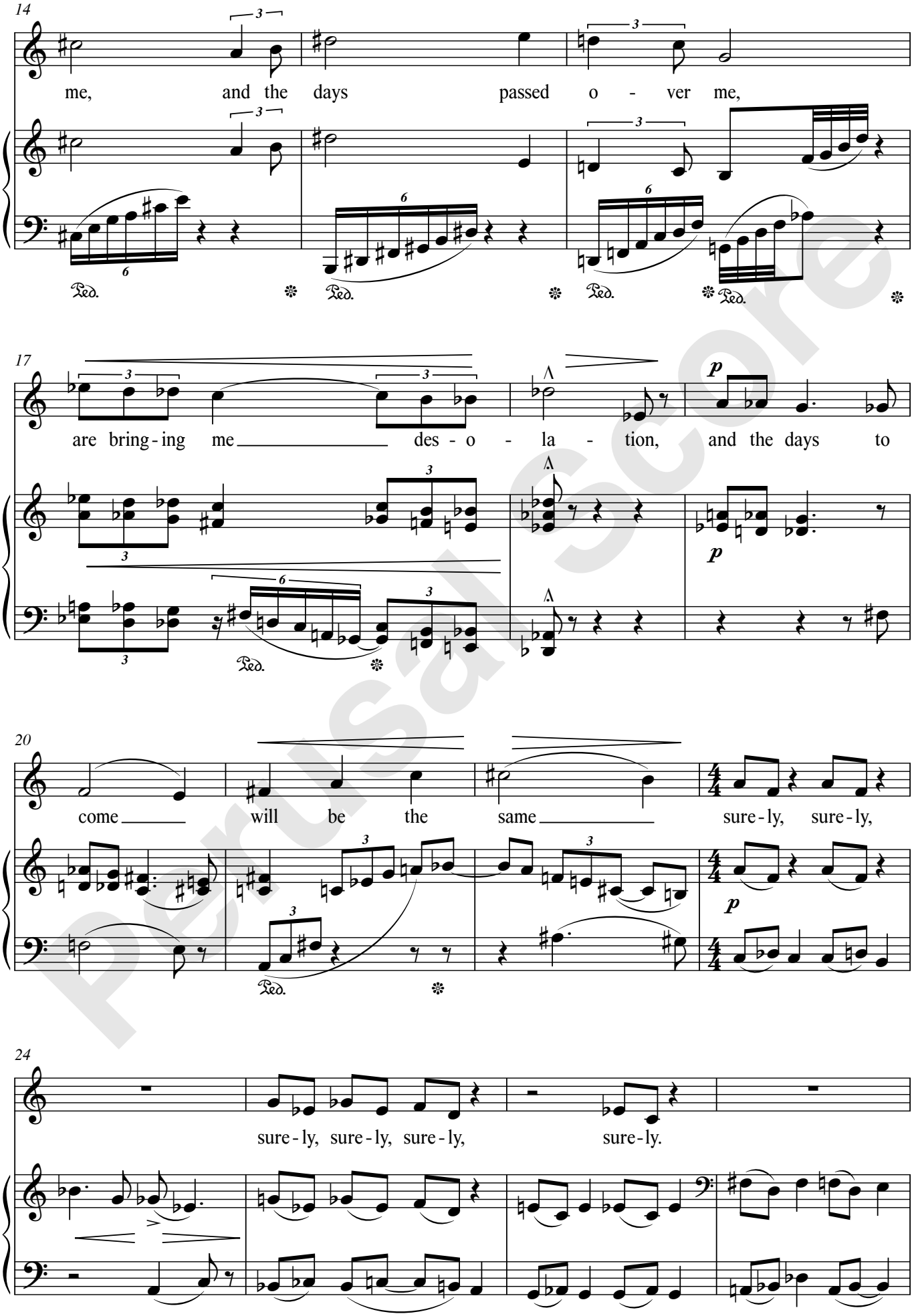

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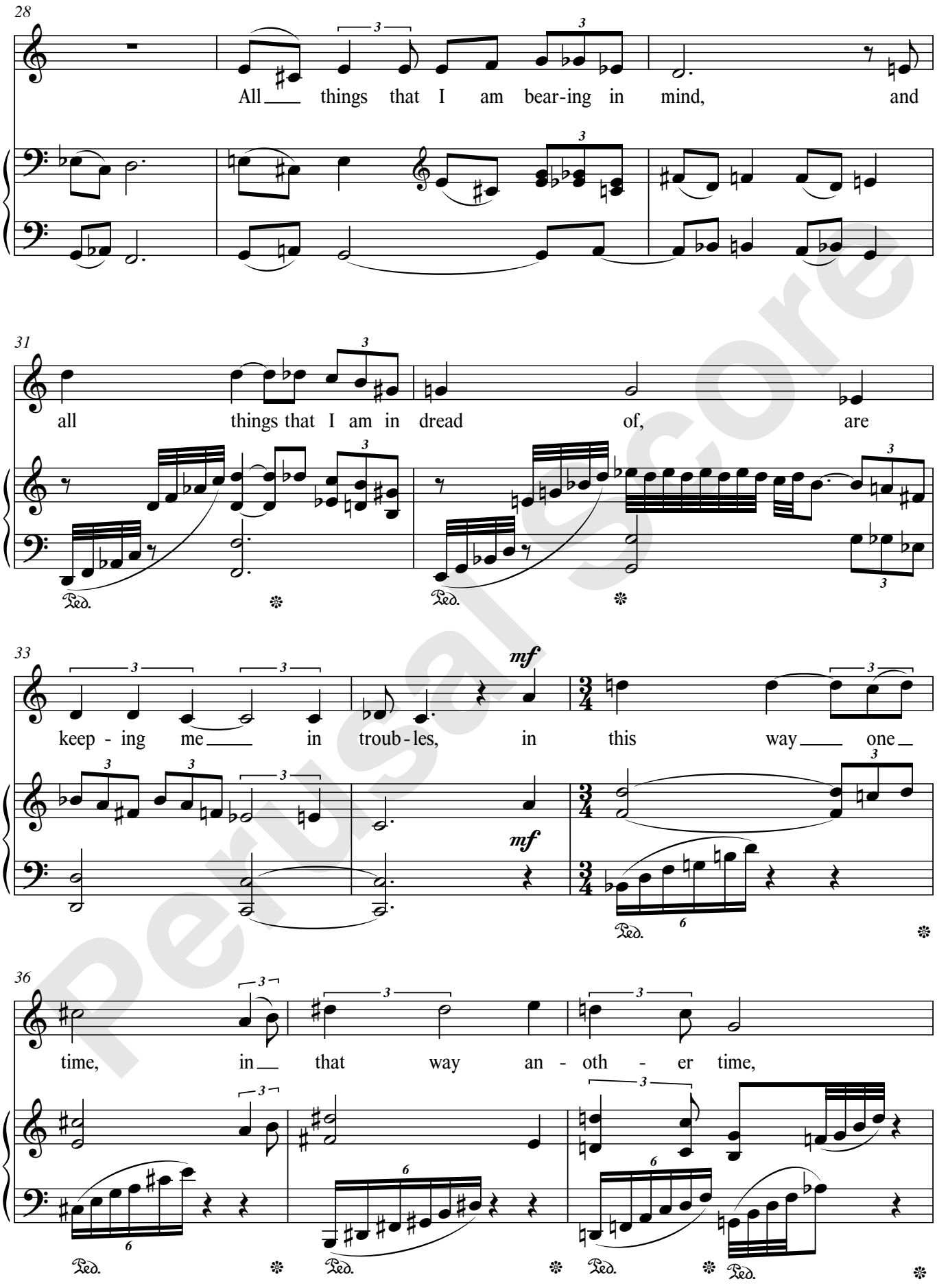

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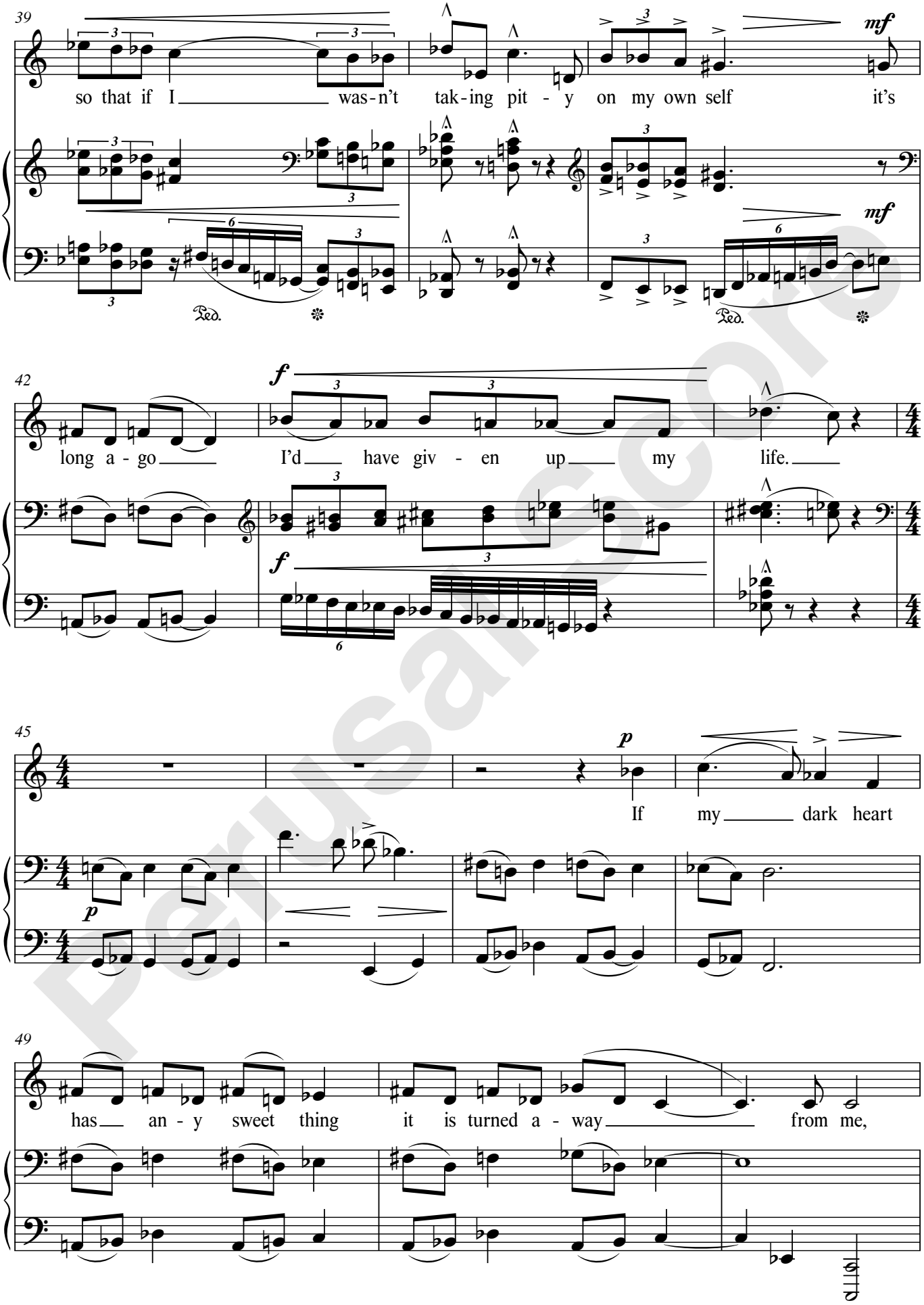

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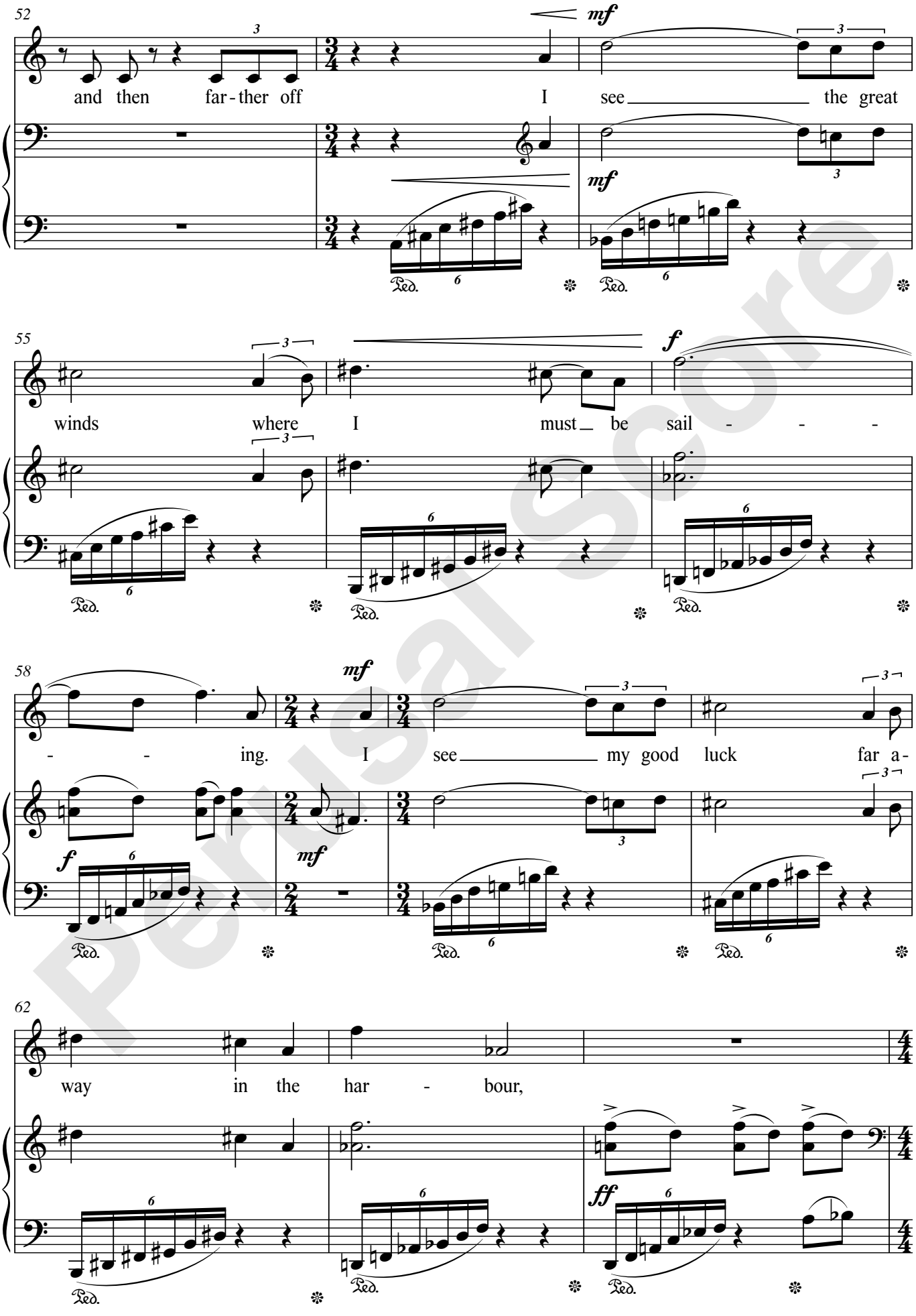

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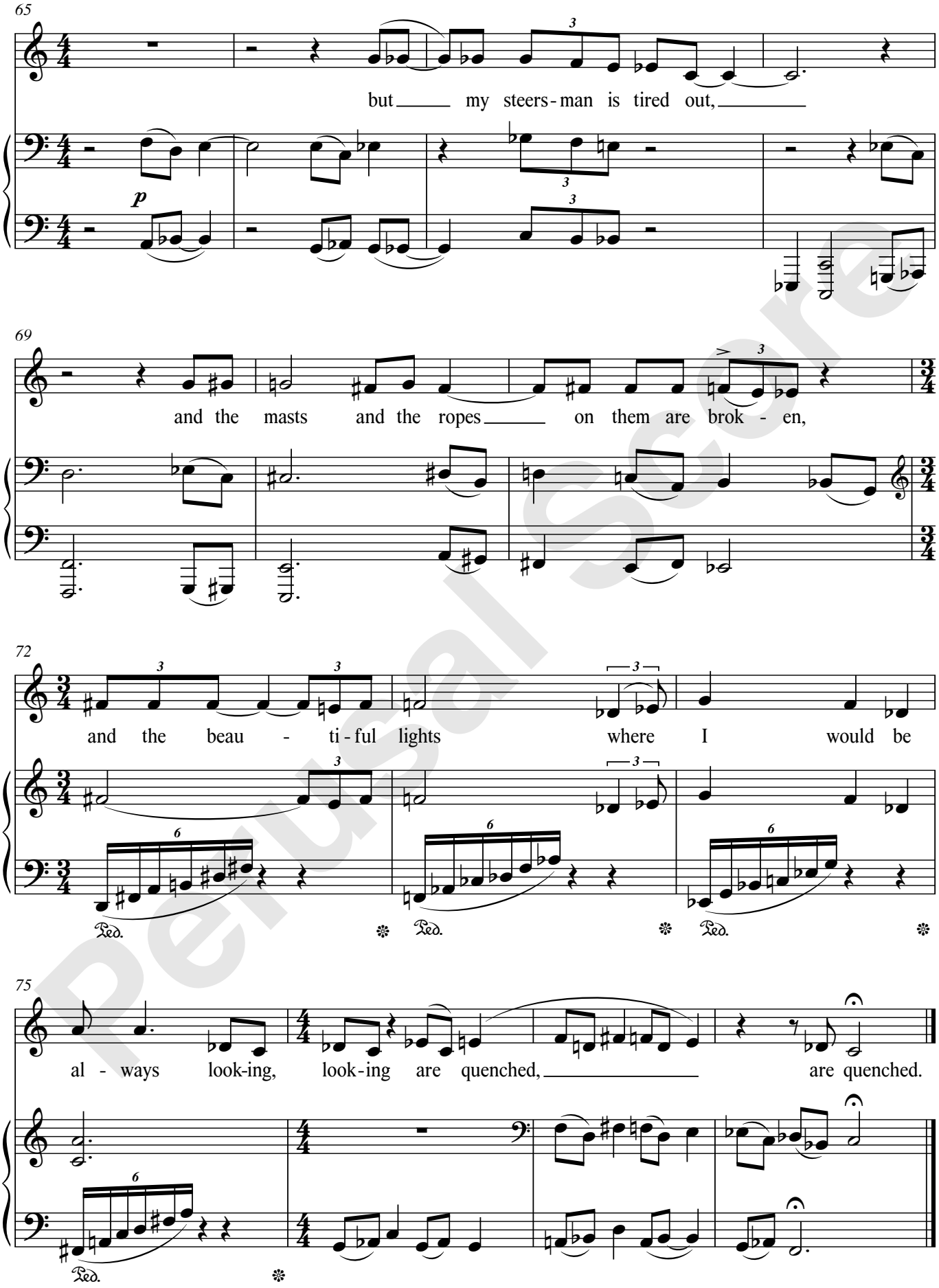

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16 July 2020
Monedie, Aberdeenshire

2

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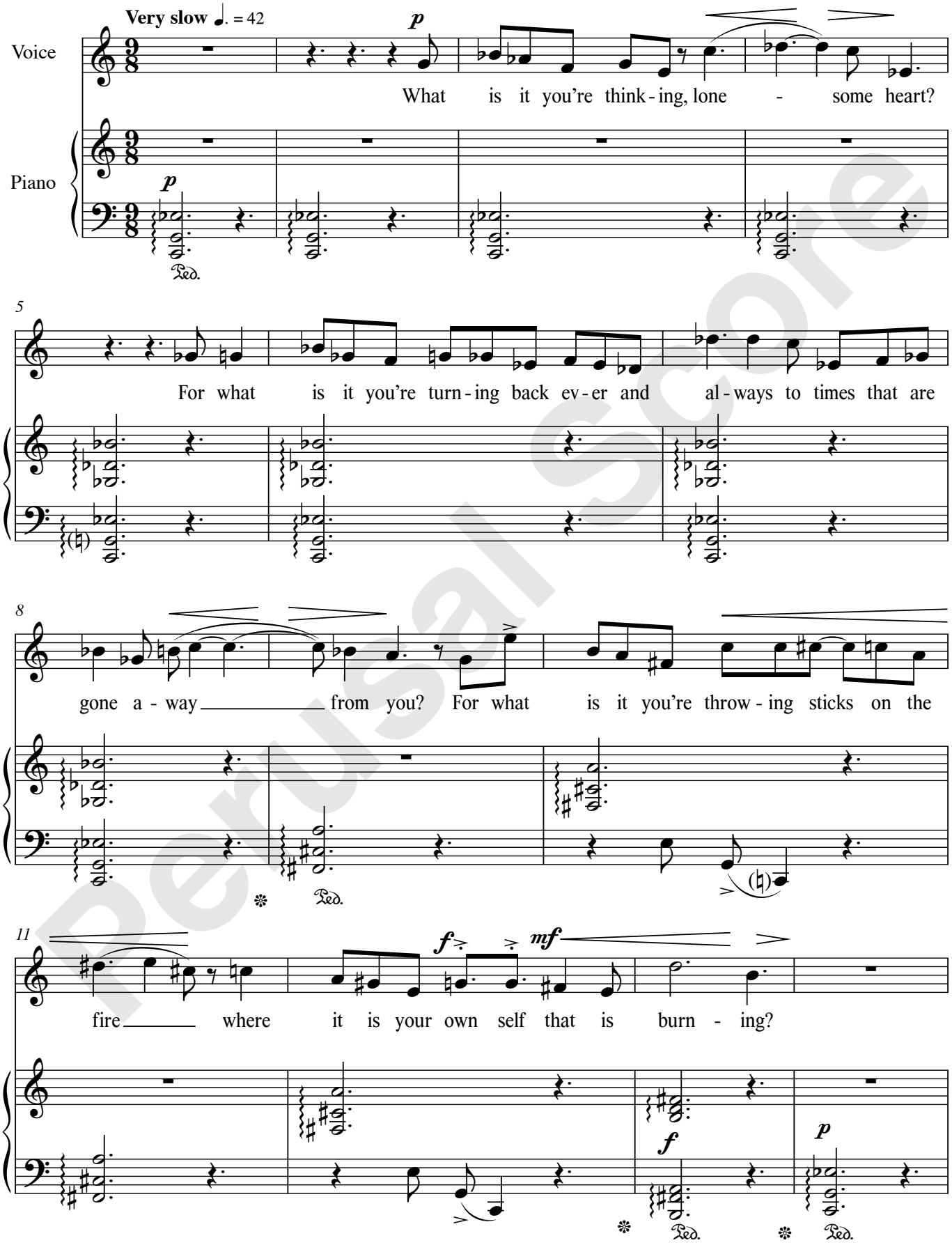

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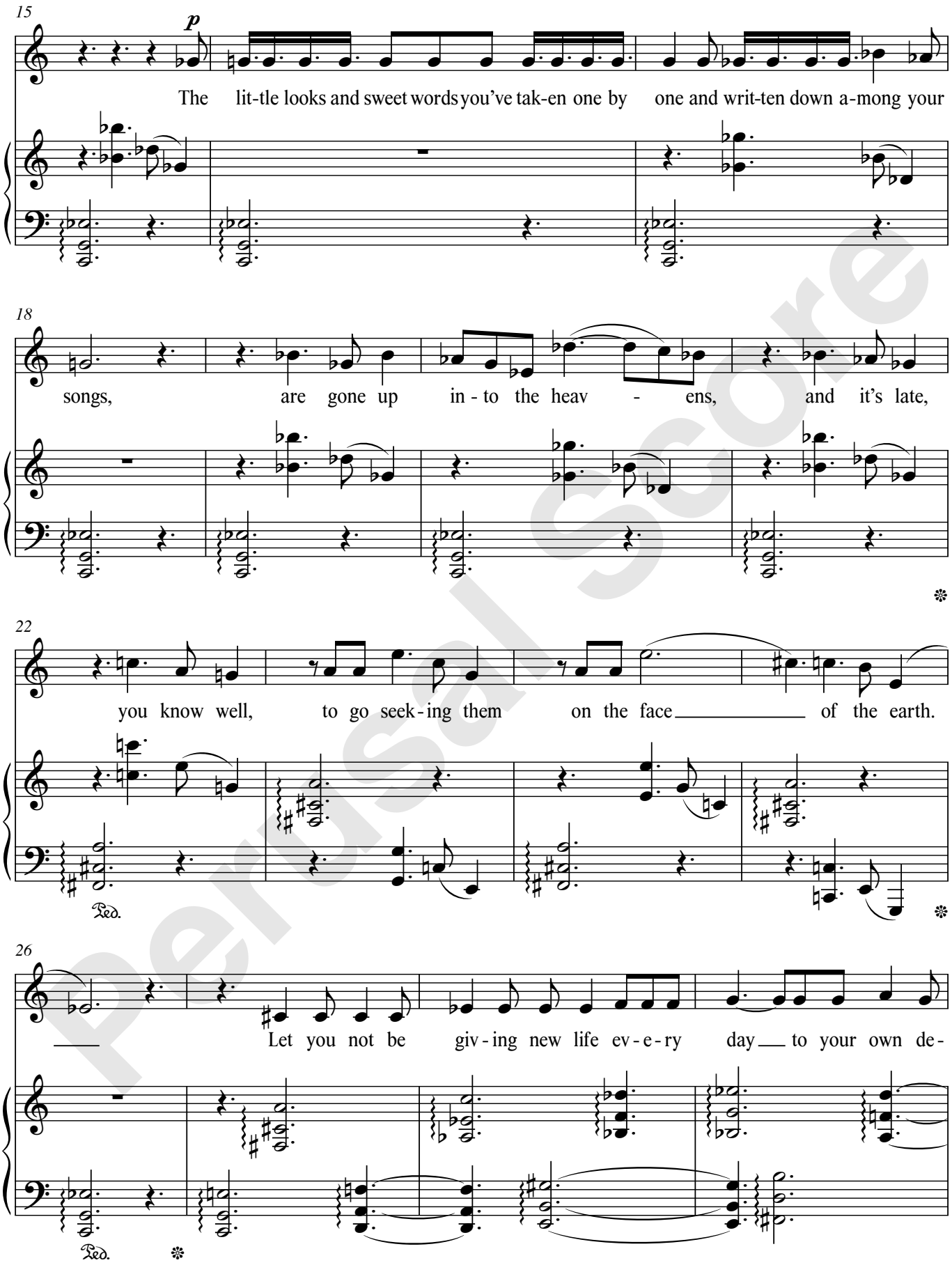

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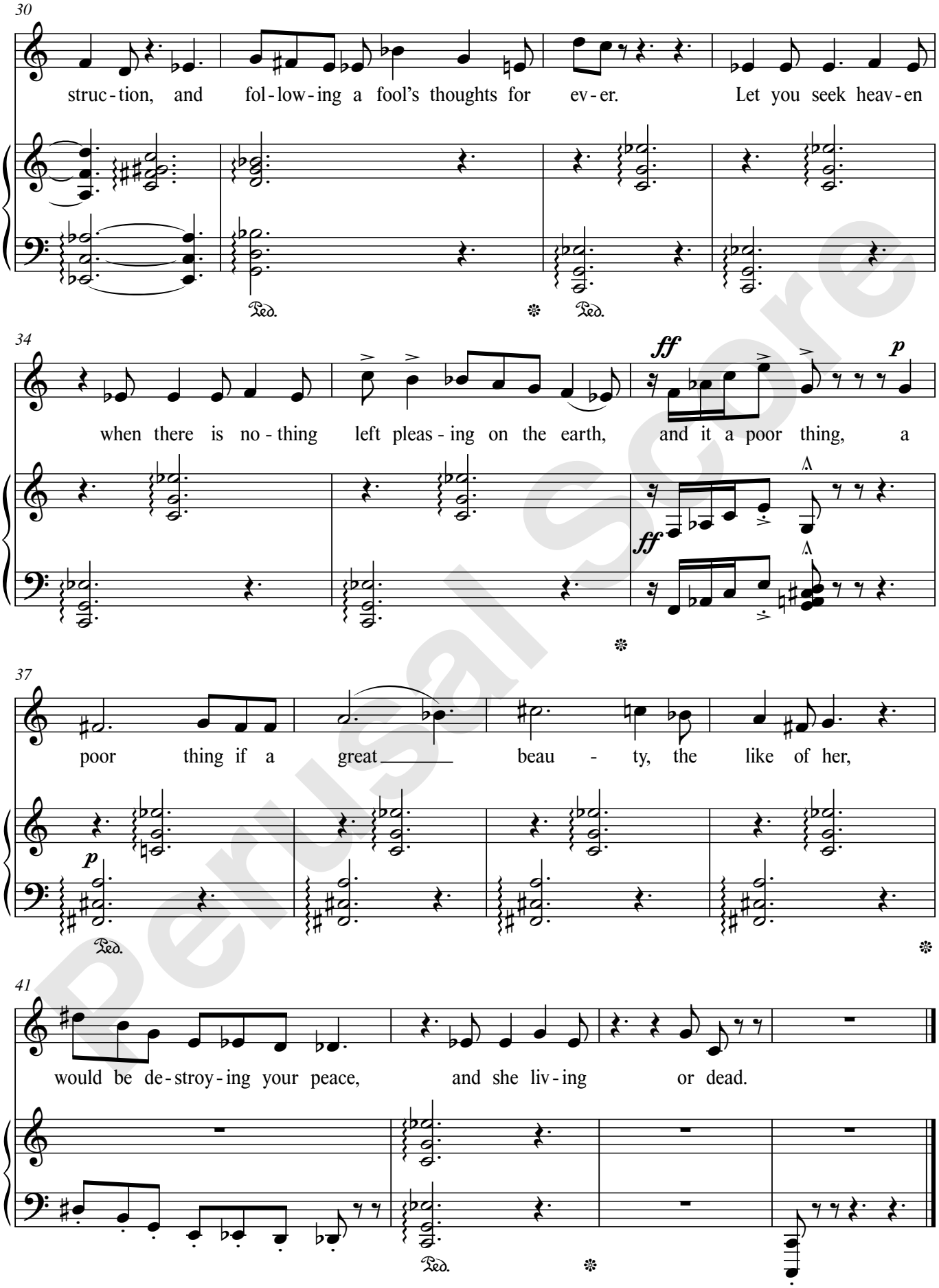

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3

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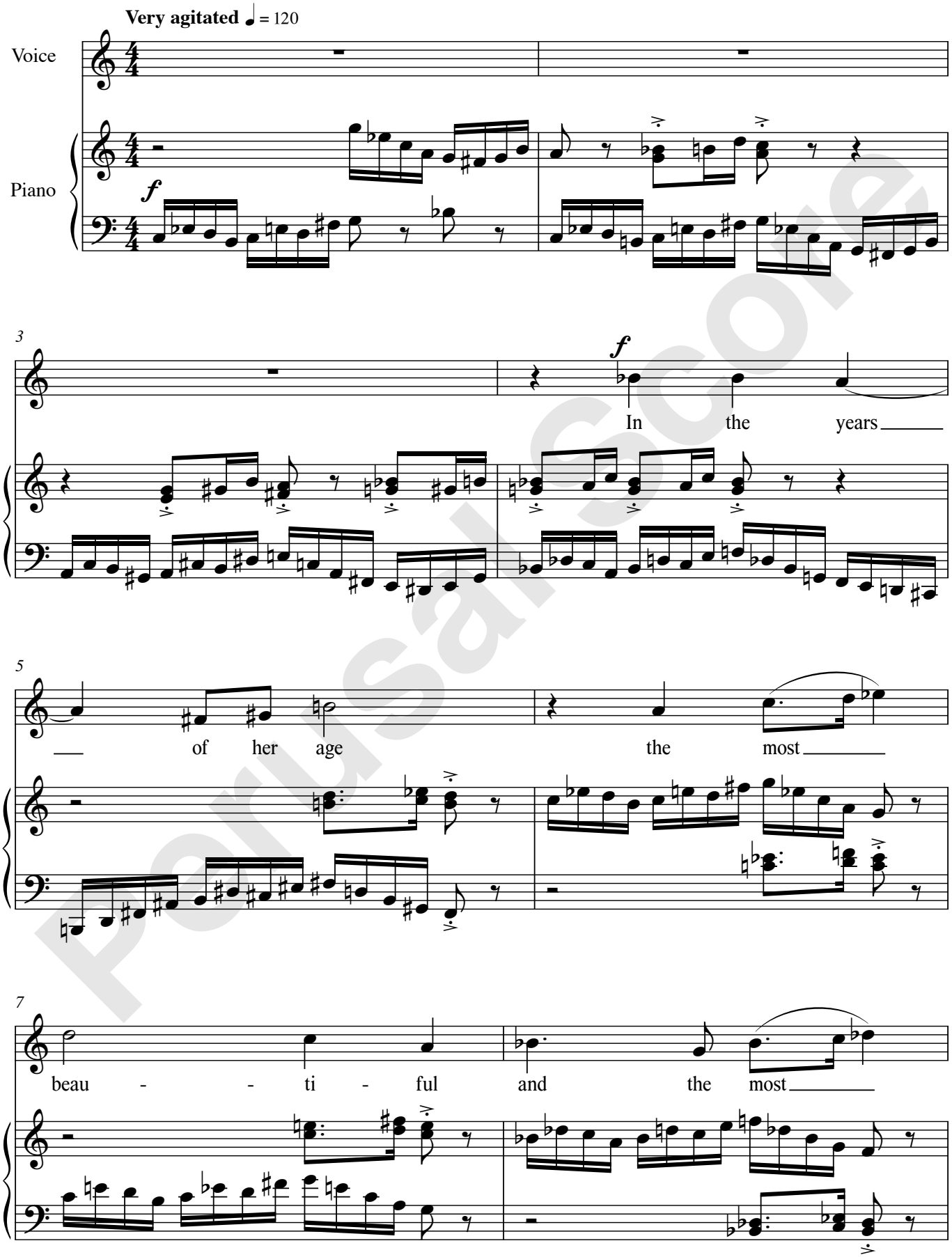

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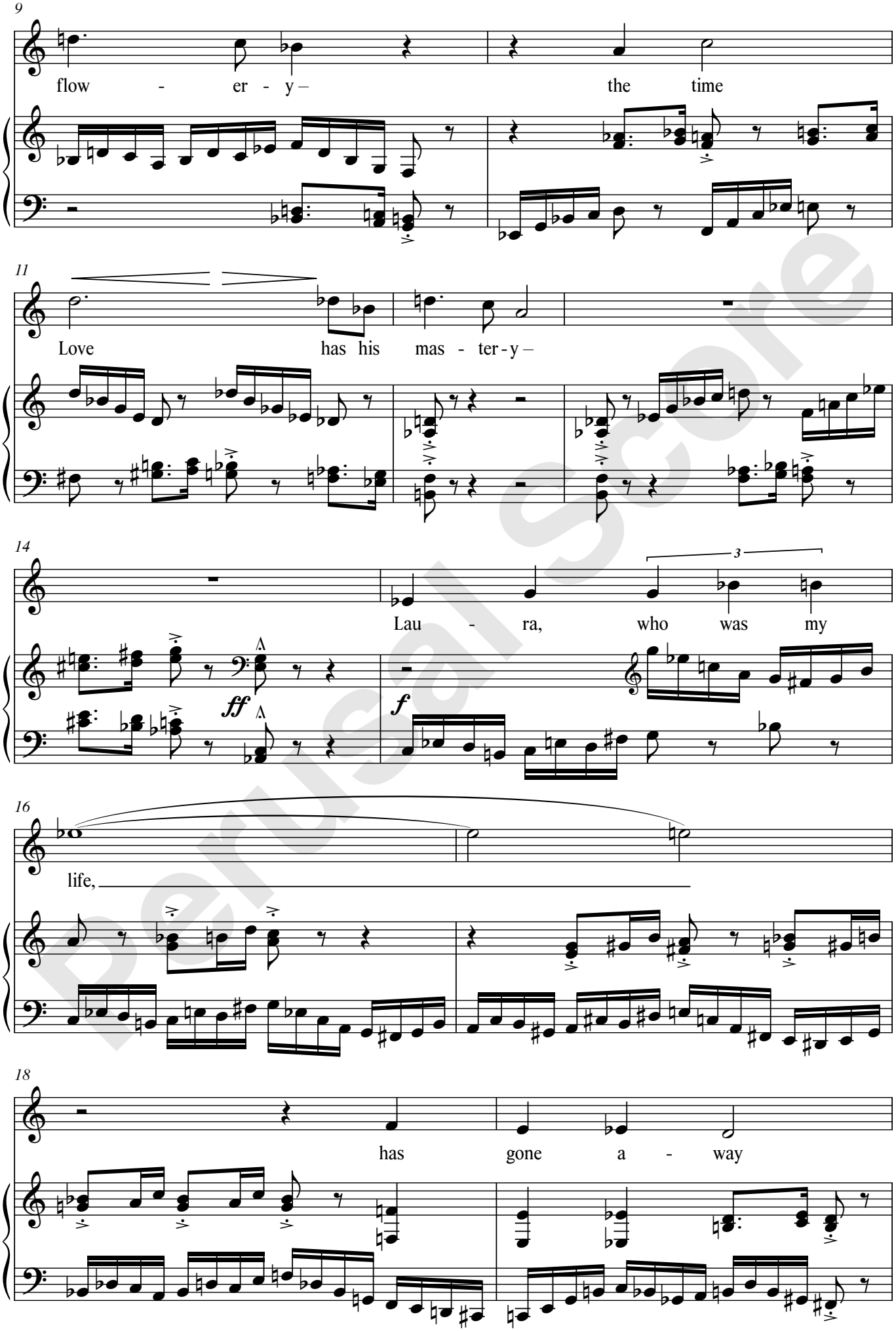

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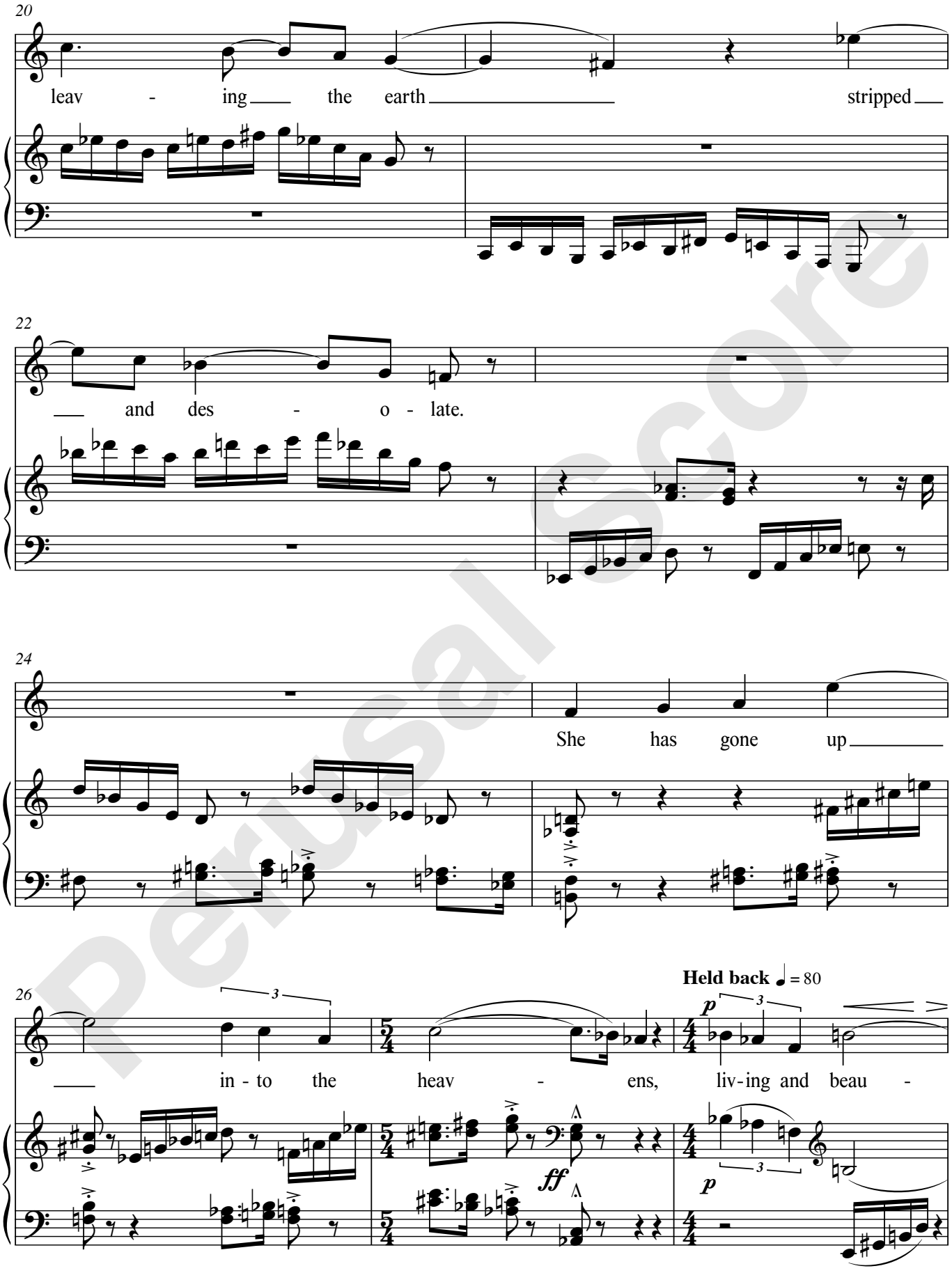

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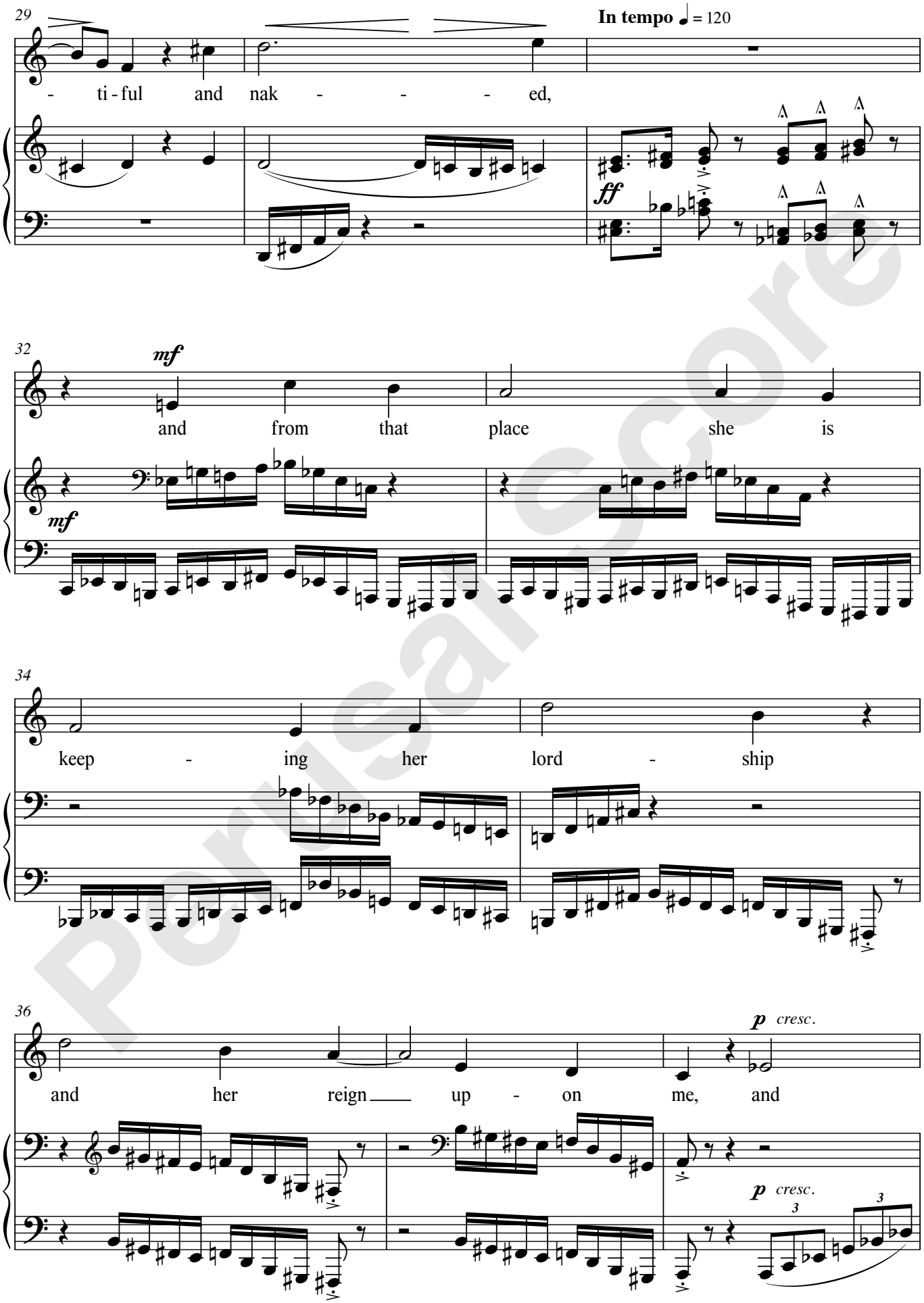

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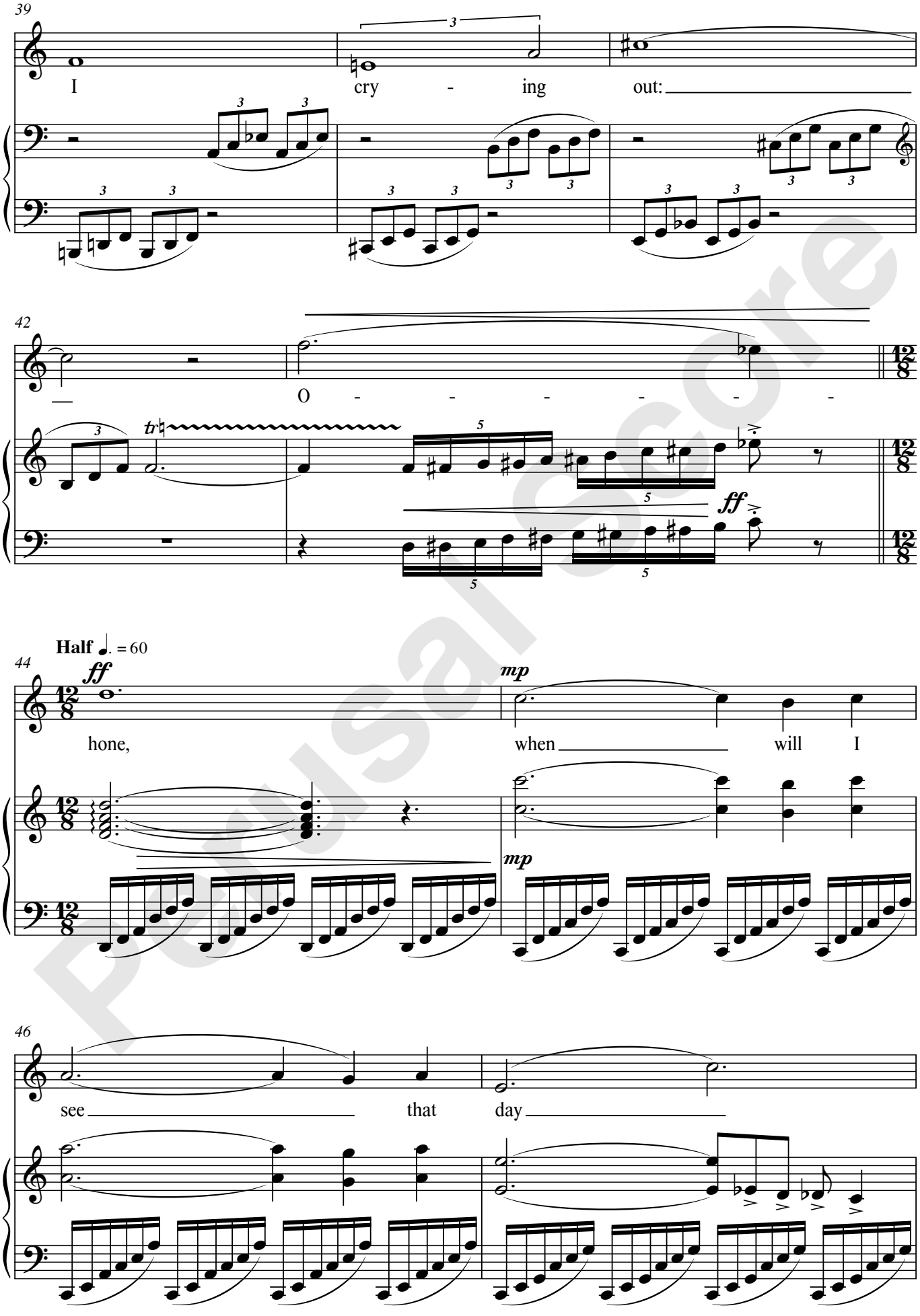
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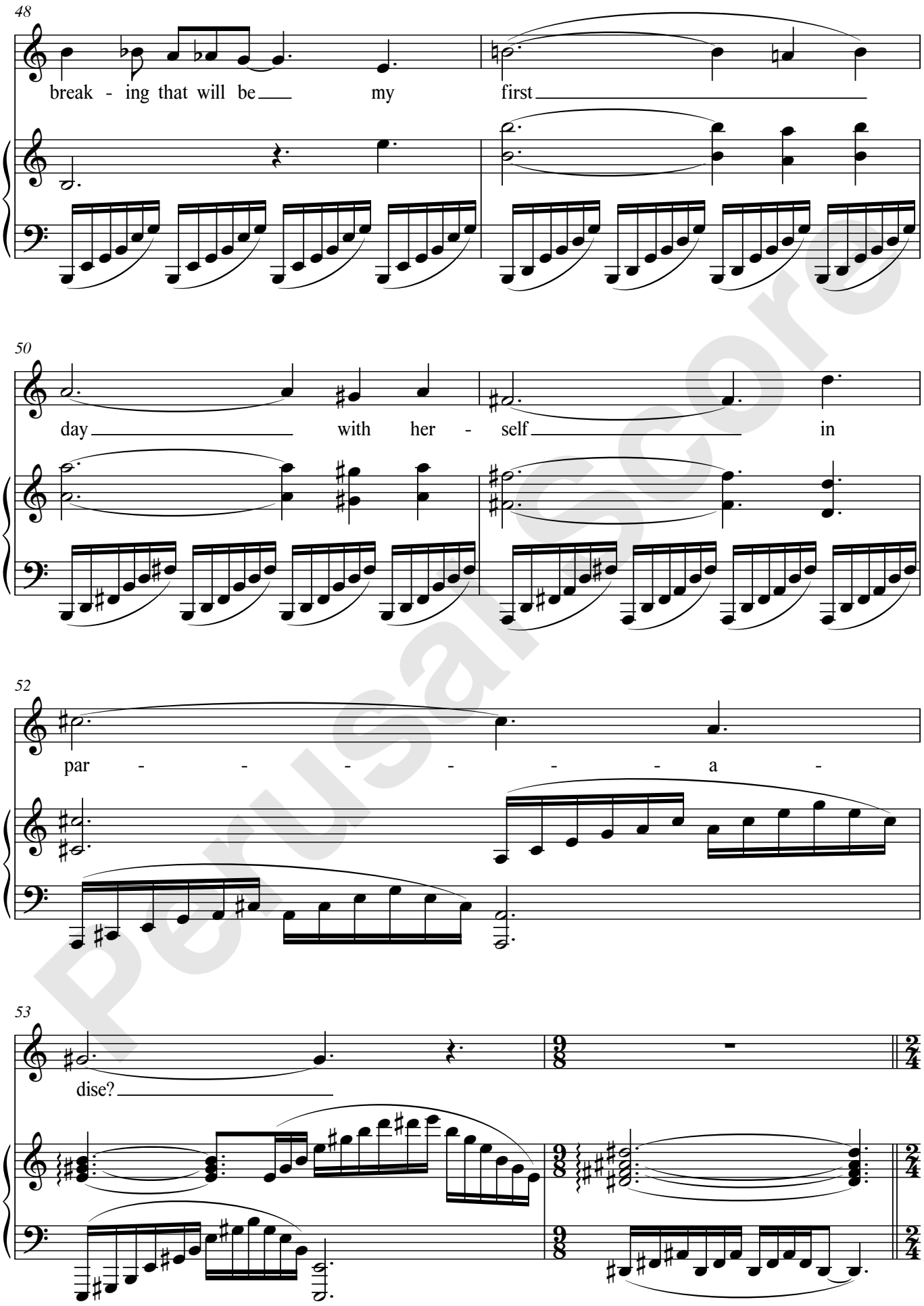

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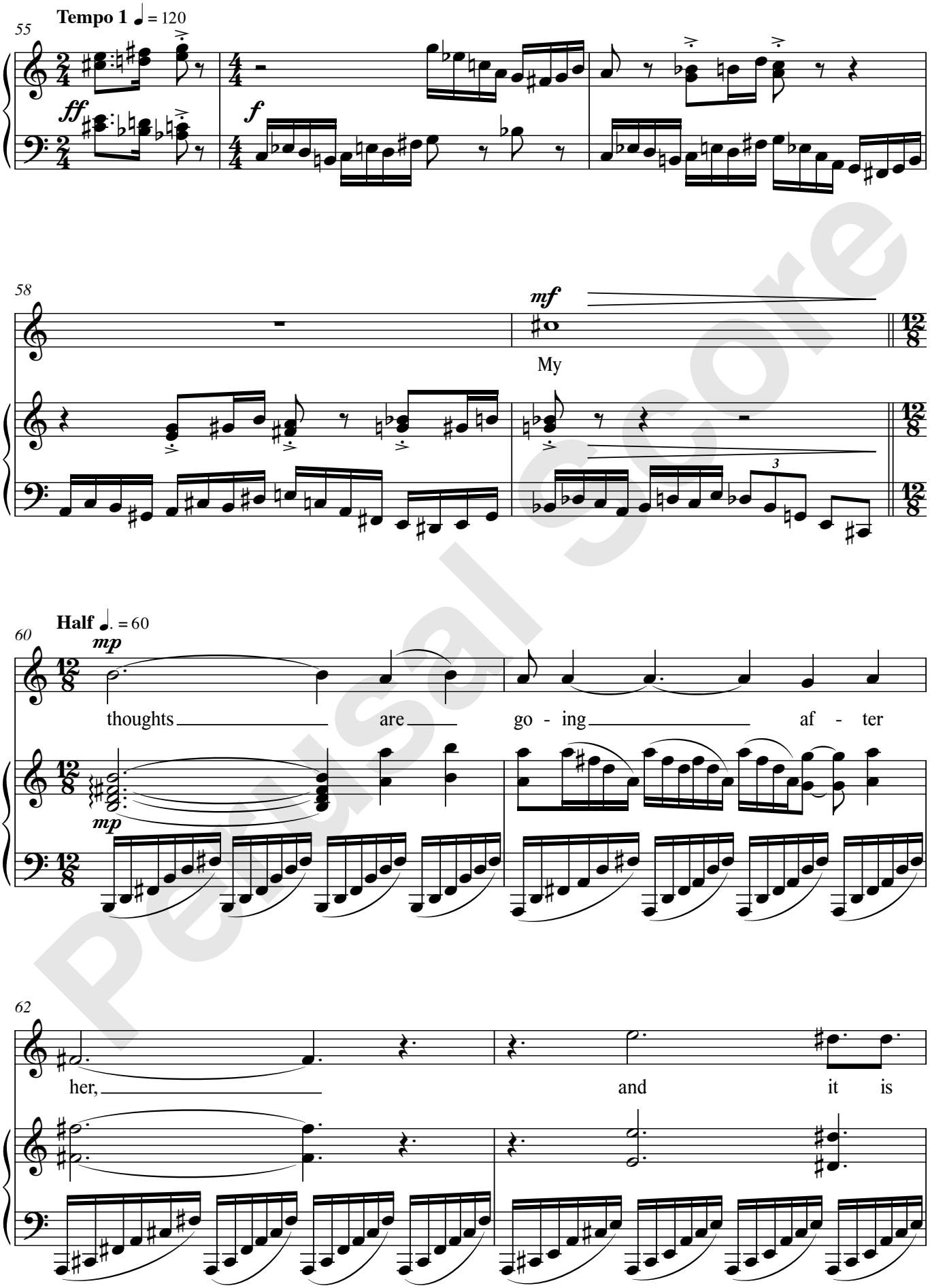

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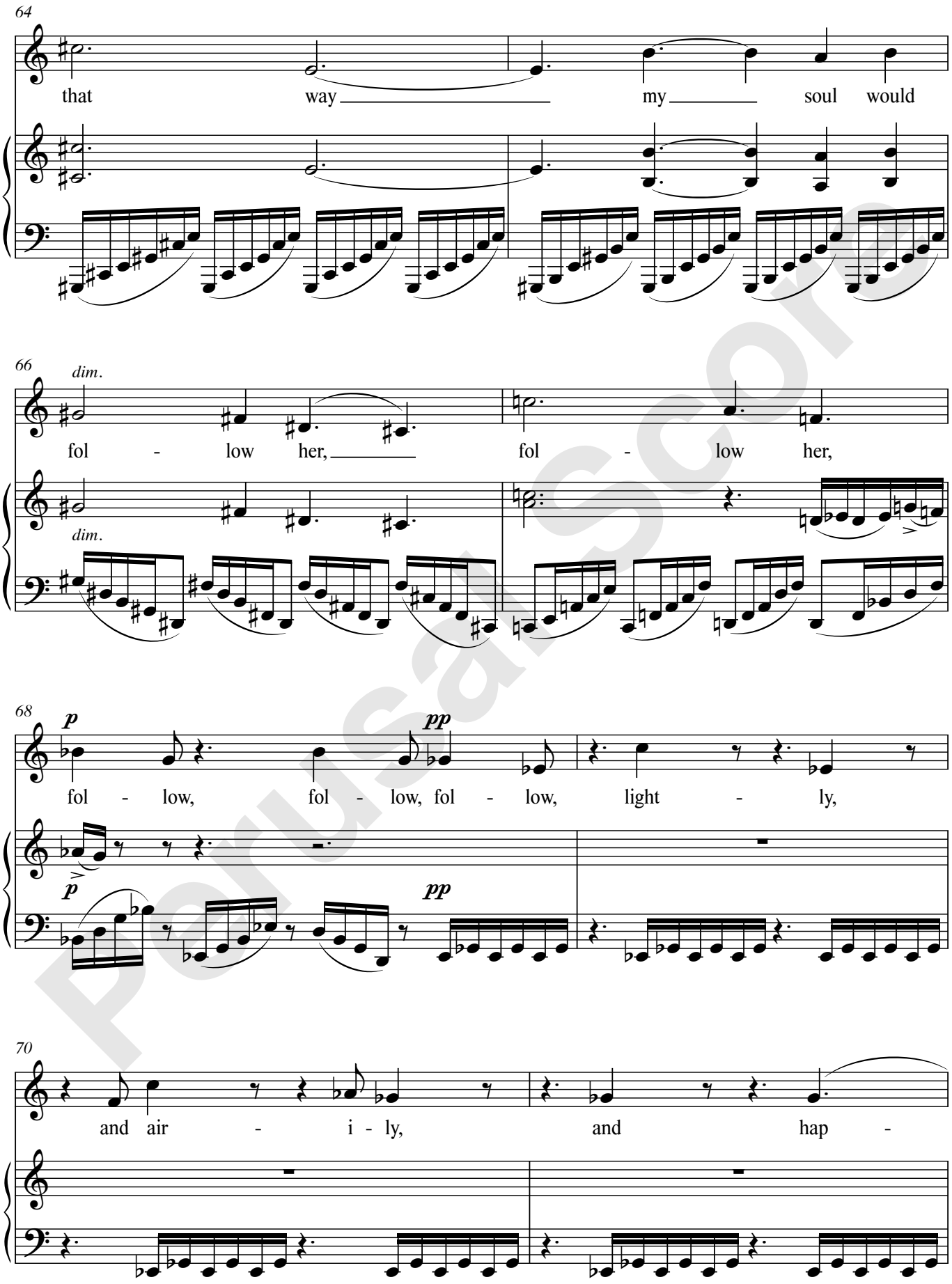

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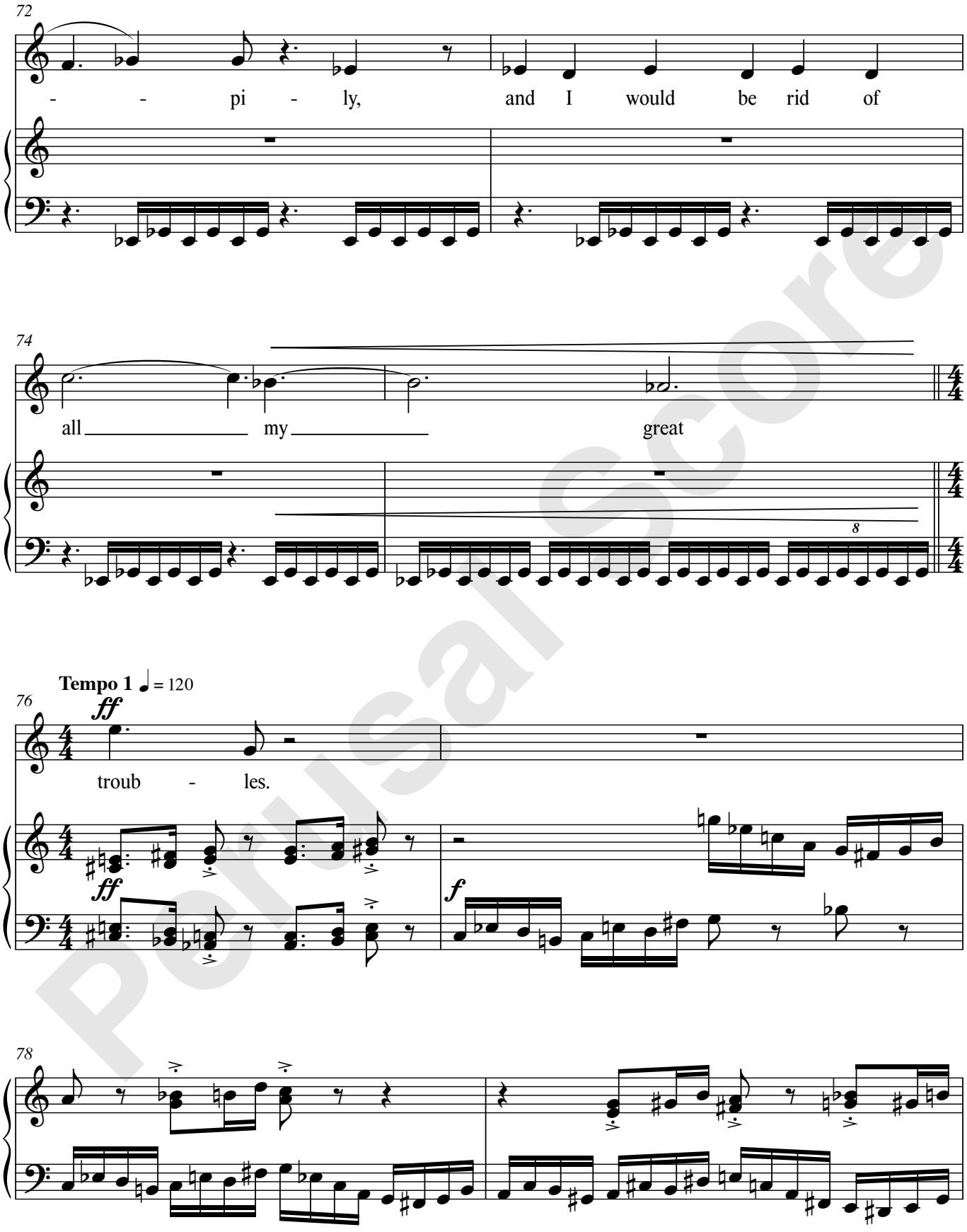

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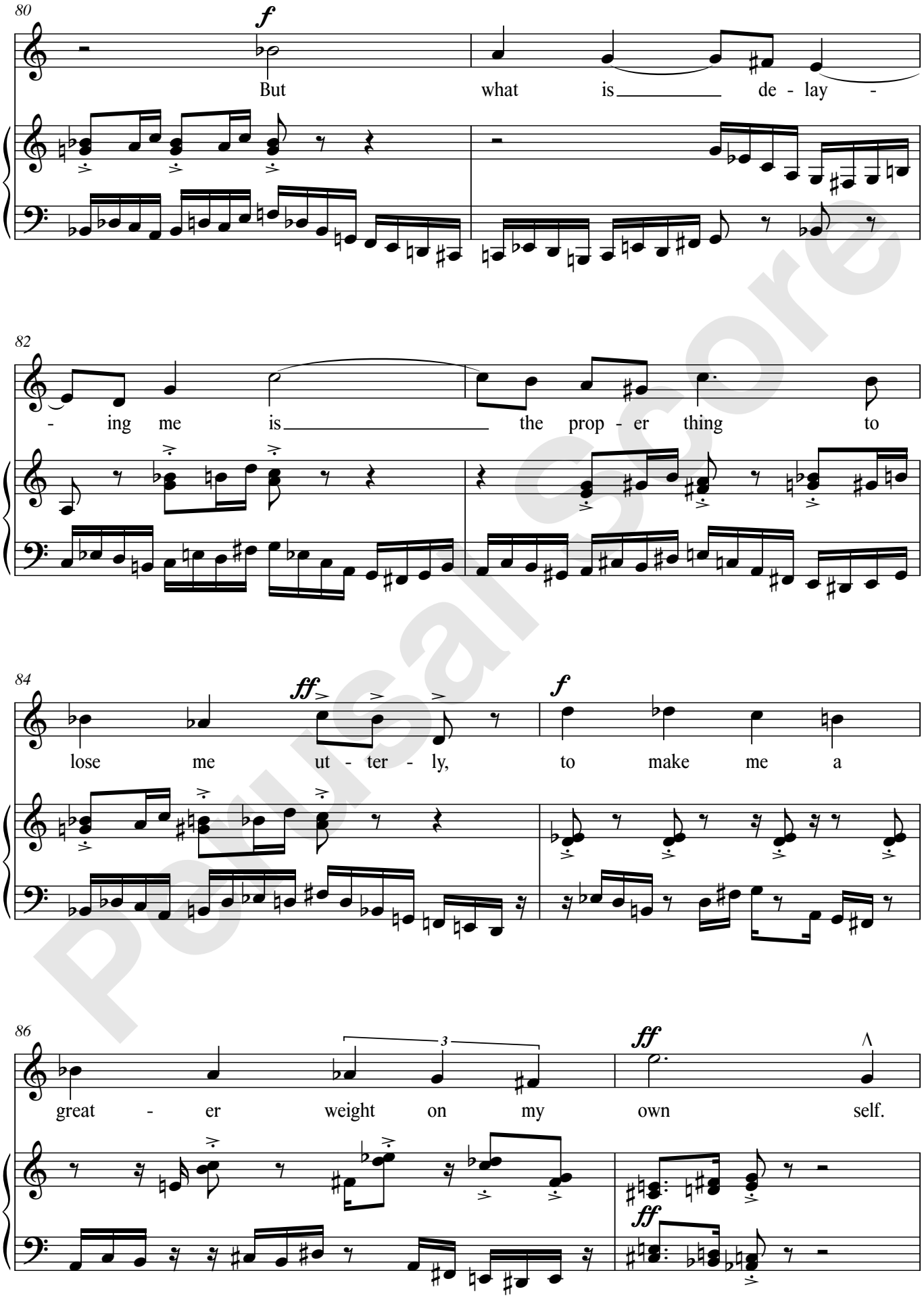

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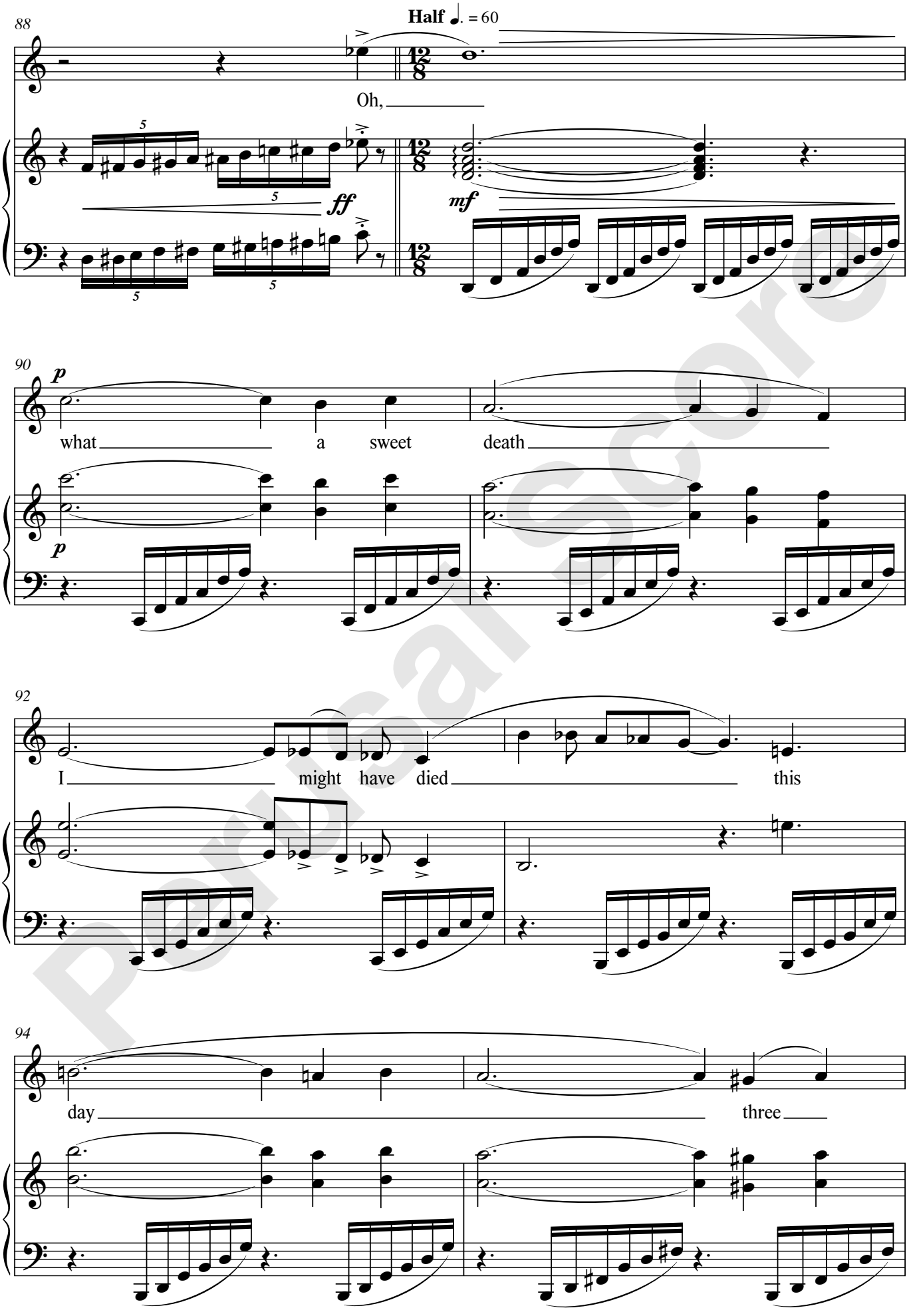

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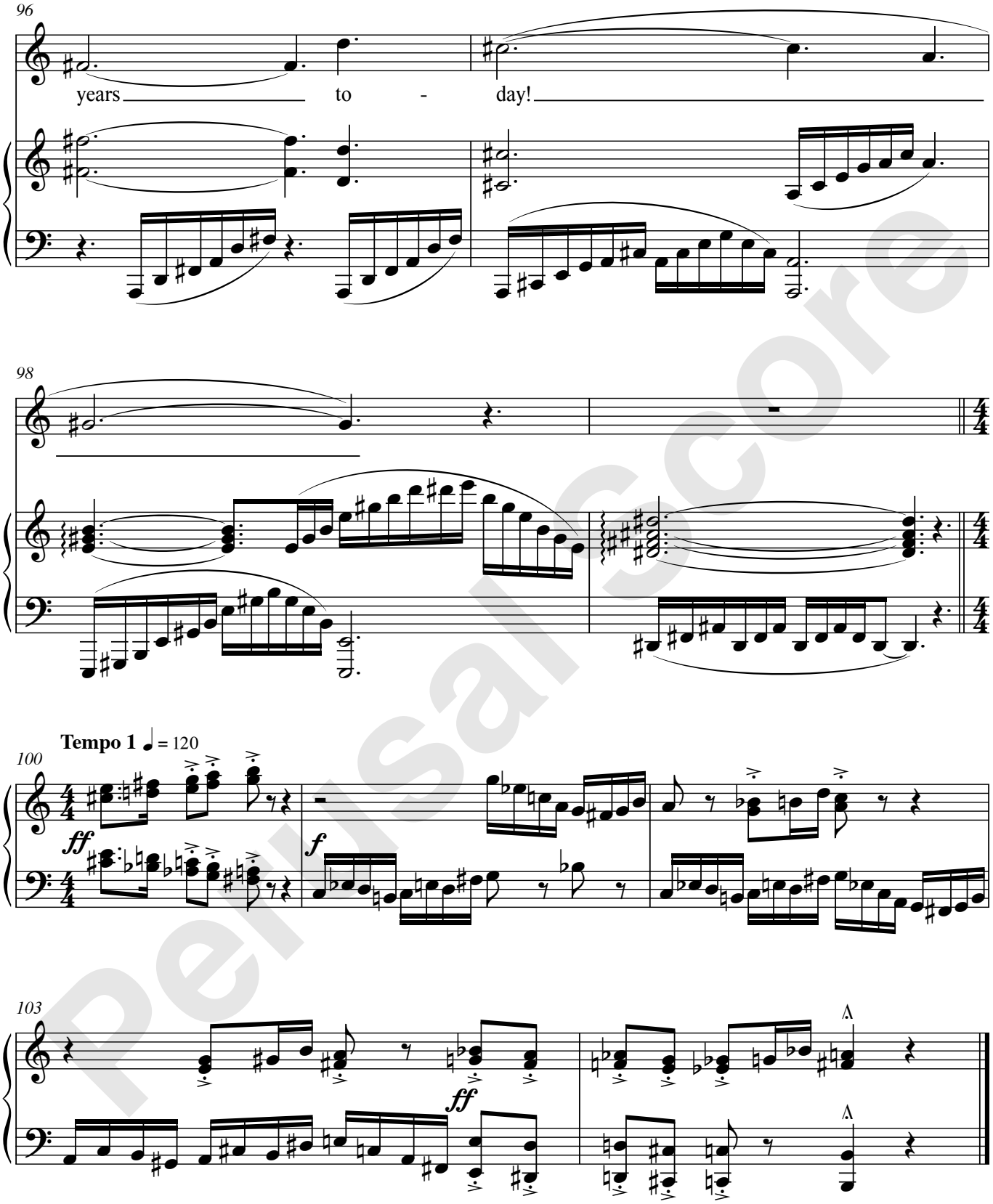

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